



Exams in English for speakers of other languages

If you are studying English as a second language, there are many exams that you can take. You need to think about what your needs are:

- Do you want to show that you have made progress in your studies? The Home Office may ask you to prove this if you want to renew your visa.
- Are you going back to your home country soon and need a certificate to show you have made progress?
- Do you want a certificate that will help you to get a better job?
- Do you want to get into university?
- Does your employer sponsor your course and want you to take an exam?

At Excel College we can help you prepare for the following exams:

	EXAM FEES 2010
Trinity College London Speaking Test	£60
Cambridge University Preliminary English Test (PET)	£78
Cambridge University First Certificate in English (FCE)	£97
Cambridge University Advanced Certificate in English (CAE)	£101
Cambridge University Business English Certificate (BEC)	£101
Cambridge University Certificate in Legal English (ILEC)	£136
International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	£110
Internet-Based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	£115

Here are some points to remember:

Cambridge Exams like PET, FCE, CAE are valid for life. However, you can only take them 2 or 3 times a year: in May/June, December and March. Many universities will accept CAE for undergraduate programmes. If you are preparing for FCE or CAE you will have more time to learn skills and improve your grammar than if you are studying for IELTS.

Trinity Speaking tests can be taken any time, as long as we have at least 10 people who want to take it. The test is quite informal and friendly. The cost is also quite low - currently about £60.

IELTS or TOEFL are needed for university access. TOEFL is needed if you want to study in the USA. The result is only valid for 2 years. IELTS doesn't really prepare you for your university study though, for this a study skills course is better.

Cambridge BEC and ILEC are more useful if you want to learn about a specific career. What you learn on the course will be very useful later in your work. Some universities will accept BEC Higher for admission purposes. BEC is also recognised by many multinational companies.

Our advice:

If you just want to show the Home Office that you are making progress, we advise you to take Trinity College speaking test. You can enter for the level your teacher recommends, from 1 to 12. Very few students fail this test.

If you want to go back to your home country with a certificate, FCE or CAE may be the best choice. Companies in many countries prefer these to IELTS because they are more practical. Universities in Europe will often give students credits so they don't need to take English courses.

If you want to stay in the UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada or New Zealand in the next two years, or if you want to live in the UK and practise as a medical professional, you need to take the academic version of IELTS. For the USA you need the TOEFL. If you just want to emigrate to Canada or Australia, the general training version of IELTS is probably enough.

If you want to study a business degree or get a job at management level, we recommend Cambridge BEC. Whereas IELTS is not subject specific and a lot of what you learn will not be useful for your university course, everything on a BEC course is relevant to business and economics.

Finally, if you want to work in a law firm or study law, you should consider taking the ILEC.